

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:01 p.m. on Wednesday, October 20, 2010 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Skoll.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Browning, Busch, Gibson, Skoll, Weideman and Chairperson Horwich.

Absent: Commissioner Uchima.

Also Present: Planning Assistant Graham, Sr. Planning Associate Santana, Plans Examiner Noh, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Fire Marshal Kazandjian and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to grant Commissioner Uchima an excused absence from this meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Thursday, October 15, 2010.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Browning moved to approve the September 15, 2010 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous voice vote, with Commissioner Gibson abstaining (absent Commissioner Uchima).

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS – None.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 – None.

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Chairperson Horwich reviewed the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

8. TIME EXTENSIONS – None.

9. CONTINUED HEARINGS – None.

10. WAIVERS – None.

Agenda Item 12A was considered out of order at this time.

**12A. CUP09-00023, GPA09-00001, TTM71250 (EAS09-00005): DAVID BOYD
(OLD TOWN REDLANDS, LLC/DOROTHY CAKE FAMILY TRUST)**

Planning Commission adoption of resolutions reflecting their decision to adopt a Negative Declaration, approve a Conditional use Permit to construct a self-storage building with underground parking and interim RV storage in conjunction with a Tentative Tract Map to create five lots to match existing parcel usage and recommend approval of a General Plan Amendment to reconcile a proposed new lot to match existing zoning on property located in the ML-C4 Zone at 20525 Hawthorne Boulevard.

Planning Assistant Graham read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 10-056 and 10-057.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 10-056 and 10-057. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

11. FORMAL HEARINGS

11A. PRE10-00006: SABRINA HSU

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow first and second story additions to an existing two-story, single-family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 5004 Reynolds Drive.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Graham introduced the request.

Will Basilio, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Browning moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

MOTION: Commissioner Browning moved for the approval of PRE10-00006, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

Commissioner Busch commented that he thought the staff report spoke for itself.

Planning Assistant Graham read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-060.

MOTION: Commissioner Browning moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-060. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

11B. CUP10-00013: BOB SUPERNEAU/STANTEC ARCHITECTURE (AUTONATION, INC.)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a new automobile dealership utilizing the existing vacant buildings and parking area on properties located in the H-PR Zone at 20626 and 20710 Hawthorne Boulevard.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Graham introduced the request.

Larry Tidball, Stantec Architecture, project architect, explained that this property, which formerly housed a Nissan dealership, has been vacant for several months and the owner has applied for a Conditional Use Permit to expedite the process when a franchise agreement is reached with another auto manufacturer. He expressed concerns about the following conditions:

- No. 5 *Requires a plan for improving the site to be developed once a tenant has been identified, which establishes the new dealership's identity and substantially complies with the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan.* He explained that the applicant had no objection to this condition as long as it does not delay the opening of the dealership.
- No. 7 *Requires the driveway on Garnet Street to be abandoned.* He reported that closing this driveway could be a deal breaker for a prospective dealership because it would impede circulation and access to the site.
- No. 17 *Requires an acoustical analysis confirming that noise levels of equipment used on the site will not exceed allowable levels per the Torrance Municipal Code.* He stated that he did not see how this could be completed before the dealership is operational and suggested that this be done within 90 days of opening for business.
- No.21 *Requires a Lot Tie Agreement to be recorded prior to the granting of any building permits, which provides that multiple lots underlying this property shall not be sold, leased, or financed separately.* He expressed concerns that finalizing a Lot Tie Agreement could take some time to complete because there are multiple owners.
- No.22 *Requires 7'5" concrete sidewalk on Hawthorne Boulevard to be replaced with sod and irrigation system.* He reported that Caltrans does not allow sod parkways unless they are over 8' wide and expressed concerns that obtaining a permit from Caltrans to do the landscaping is a 90-day process, which could delay the opening of a dealership.

Mr. Tidball explained that the applicant's goal is to get a car dealership up and running as quickly as possible, which will provide tax revenue for the City and generate a revenue stream to help pay for some of the larger improvements.

Commissioner Busch related his belief that it was very important to bring in new auto dealerships to replace those that have become vacant along Hawthorne Boulevard.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana responded to Mr. Tidball's concerns about conditions as follows:

No. 5 He advised that the site has not been maintained and needs to be brought up to current standards and while staff would like it to be done in advance of the dealership's opening, the timeframe could be changed to within 6 months of opening.

No. 7 He explained that staff recommended that the Garnet driveway be closed due to its proximity to other driveways and because it would allow for more street parking, but staff would support the retention of the driveway if display parking that encroaches into the required 25-foot clearance for entering/exiting the driveway is eliminated.

No. 17 He noted that this is a common requirement, especially when service bays are adjacent to residential properties, to ensure that equipment does not exceed City noise limits and the analysis is based on data from the equipment manufacturer.

No. 22 He stated that staff would support the installation of a low-growing groundcover in the parkway instead of sod.

With regard to Condition No. 21, Associate Civil Engineer Symons advised that staff requested the Lot Tie due to concerns that one of the buildings is built over the property line and that approval is not a lengthy process and can be accomplished in about a week.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Tidball clarified that Autonation owns one of the properties and leases the other; that the same lease agreement was in place for the Nissan Dealership; and that Autonation will be operating the new dealership franchise.

In response to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that the Code requires that on-site parking be provided for only half of the maximum number of employees (60 employees = 30 parking spaces), therefore staff included a condition (No. 14) that all employees must park on-site.

Referring to Condition No. 23, which requires the use of surveillance cameras, Commissioner Browning requested that staff include a more detailed condition in the future that lists minimum requirements for surveillance cameras, how long tapes must be saved, and how often the cameras should be checked to ensure that they're operational. He noted that many crimes are now solved due to surveillance cameras but they do little good if they are not properly maintained or if tapes are not kept for a sufficient period of time.

Referring to Condition No. 21, Commissioner Browning expressed concerns that property owners might object to a Lot Tie Agreement since it would tie the two lots together and make it impossible to sell, lease or finance them independently even though they are separately owned.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the Lot Tie Agreement, and Sr. Planning Associate Santana reiterated staff's concern that one of the buildings straddles the property line, which could create legal issues in the future if the lots remain separate.

Mr. Tidball submitted an ALTA (American Land Title Association) survey for the property to Associate Civil Engineer Symons for review.

Commissioner Skoll suggested the possibility of continuing the hearing since there seemed to be a number of unresolved issues, but it was the consensus of the Commission that the conditions under contention could be dealt with this evening.

A brief discussion ensued concerning Condition No. 7. Mr. Tidball explained that closing the Garnet Street driveway would be a hardship for a dealership and would decrease the value of the property. He noted that there is no change in the use of the property and no evidence has been presented to suggest that the new dealership would generate any more traffic than the previous one. He reported that the City required the driveway to be reconstructed in conjunction with the approval of the Nissan dealership and pointed out that the Audi dealership across the street has a driveway on Garnet.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana advised that staff would support the retention of the Garnet Street driveway if Condition No. 7 is amended to state that a minimum clear width of 25 feet shall be maintained. Mr. Tidball confirmed that the amended condition was acceptable.

Mr. Tidball indicated that he no longer objected to Condition No. 17 since he now understands that the acoustical analysis is theoretical. He requested that the applicant be allowed to do major improvements, including the upgrade of the façade and replacing the sidewalk on Hawthorne Boulevard with landscaping, within a certain timeframe after the dealership opens rather than before.

After reviewing the ALTA survey, Associate Civil Engineer Symons reported that the building labeled "B-4" extends over the property line by approximately 3 feet and the stairway for another building is not on the same parcel and recommended that the condition requiring the Lot Tie Agreement be retained.

Commissioner Browning reiterated his concerns about the Lot Tie Agreement and a brief discussion ensued.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana proposed amending Condition No. 21 to state that either a Lot Tie Agreement or a Lot Line Adjustment shall be obtained to correct the problem of the encroaching building and stairway.

Commissioner Weideman noted that Mr. Tidball also mentioned concerns about the timeframe for Condition No. 21, and Sr. Planning Associate Santana stated that staff would be agreeable to allowing it to be done within a certain time period after occupancy.

Mr. Tidwell agreed to the proposed amendments.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of CUP10-00013, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

Modify

No. 5 That once a ~~tenant is identified~~ dealership has commenced operation, a plan shall be developed within six months which establishes the new dealership's identity and substantially complies with the Hawthorne Boulevard Specific Plan – Promenade Sub District to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

No. 7 That ~~the driveway on Garnet Street shall be abandoned~~ a minimum clear width of 25 feet shall be maintained for the existing Garnet Street driveway.

No. 21 That a Lot Tie Agreement or a Lot Line Adjustment shall be recorded ... ~~prior to granting of any building permits~~ within six months of occupancy.

No. 22 That the existing 7.5' wide concrete sidewalk adjacent to the curb on Hawthorne Boulevard shall be removed and ~~grass sod~~ ground cover with irrigation system shall be installed ...within six months of occupancy.

No. 23 That alarmed doors and surveillance cameras shall be used for entry/exits and vehicle or parts storage facilities to the satisfaction of the Torrance Police Department

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and discussion briefly continued.

Commissioner Skoll thanked Sr. Planning Associate Santana for his assistance with modifying conditions so the project could move forward.

Chairperson Horwich voiced support for the motion, stating that he did not want to do anything that would impede getting a new dealership on Hawthorne Boulevard.

Chairperson Horwich called for the vote, and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

Planning Assistant Graham read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-061.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-061, as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

The Commission recessed from 8:25 p.m. to 8:37 p.m.

11C. CUP10-00014: JOHN GHAFARI

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow on-site beer and wine service in conjunction with an existing restaurant on property located in the Downtown Redevelopment Project Area – Commercial Sector, at 1231 Cabrillo Avenue, Unit 103.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Graham introduced the request.

John Ghaffari, 1231 Cabrillo Avenue, Unit 103, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He explained that he would like to add beer and wine service as a means of improving business.

Rod Katherman, 1218 El Prado, expressed support for the application.

Voicing support for the application, Shawn Naim, representing Plaza del Prado, 1261 Cabrillo Avenue, stated that the plaza's goal is to provide an enjoyable environment with a variety of restaurants, which in turn will generate revenue for the City.

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of CUP10-0001, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

Planning Assistant Graham read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-062.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-062. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Uchima).

12. RESOLUTIONS

12A. CUP09-00023, GPA09-00001, TTM71250 (EAS09-00005): DAVID BOYD (OLD TOWN REDLANDS, LLC/DOROTHY CAKE FAMILY TRUST)

Considered out of order, see page 2.

13. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS – None.

14. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS – None.

15. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS – None.

16. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES

Sr. Planning Manager Santana reviewed the agenda for the November 3, 2010 Planning Commission meeting.

17. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

17A. Commissioner Busch asked about the scheduling of AB 1234 ethics training. Assistant City Attorney Sullivan reported that the date of the training has not been set and noted that training is also available online.

17B. Commissioner Browning requested an excused absence for the November 3 meeting.

18. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:52 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, November 3, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Amended December 1, 2010 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
